

Article Alert

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Labor Day— First Monday in September 2008



Labor Day—the first Monday in September—celebrates the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of America. The holiday is a major civic occasion, with roots deep in the Anglo-American tradition of political freedom.

Find out more about Labor Day:

History of Labor Day

From the Library of Congress:
lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/today/sep05.html

From the U.S. Department of Labor:
www.dol.gov/opa/aboutdol/laborday.htm

Labor Facts

Minimum Wage
www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/america.htm

Facts from the U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editi

Reasons People Do Not Work
www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/p70-111.pdf

Your Rights as a Worker
www.doleta.gov/jobseekers/rights_as_worker.cfm

Labor Statistics

Employment, unemployment, prices, wages, etc.
stats.bls.gov/data/home.htm

Labor Unions

History of Labor Unions
www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/history/100years.cfm

Other information about Labor Day:

www.usa.gov/Topics/Labor_Day.shtml

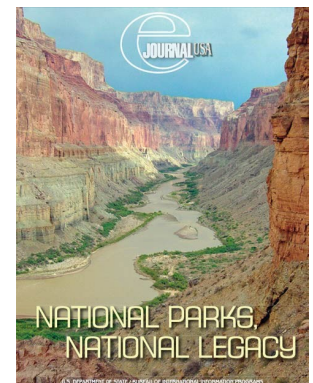
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New eJournal USA: National Parks, National Legacy

The people of the United States own and protect a sprawling system of national parks, including seashores, trails, monuments, and battlefields. All American citizens are, in a sense, stewards of sites where history unfolded, where mountains soar, and where rivers run. They keep these parks for the future, and they treasure them today. As former President

Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "There is nothing so American as our national parks. The scenery and wildlife are native. The fundamental idea behind the parks is native. It is, in brief, that the country belongs to the people." This edition of eJournalUSA presents glorious views of the national parks, the history of this vast system, and its mission of conservation and public access.



DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL ISSUES

1. Broome, John THE ETHICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE: PAY NOW OR PAY MORE LATER? (Scientific American, vol. 298, no. 5, May 2008)

The author notes that future generations will suffer most of the harmful effects of global climate change; yet if the world economy grows, they will be richer than we are. The present generation must decide, with the help of expert advice from economists, whether to aggressively reduce the chances of future harm or to let our descendants largely fend for themselves. Economists cannot avoid making ethical choices in formulating their advice; even the small chance of utter catastrophe from global warming raises special problems for ethical discussion.

2. Dickerson, John DON'T FEAR TWITTER (Nieman Reports, Summer 2008)

Are the 140-word entries on the Web site "Twitter" trivializing journalism? No, says Dickerson, the chief political correspondent for Slate. Twitter, he says, is "informal and approachable and great for conveying a little moment from an event. If written the right way, Twitter entries build a community of readers who find their way to longer articles because they are lured by these moment-by-moment observations." Himself a Twitter reader, Dickerson says Twitter has exposed him to a wider variety of news and "keen political observers and sharp writers who have never practiced journalism."

3. Nagesh, Gautham VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS (Government Executive, vol. 40, no. 8, July 2008, pp. 24-28)

The author features U.S. government agencies' efforts in the online world at public outreach efforts and improving internal communication. At the Center for Disease Control, it is possible to connect directly with the audience and reach them in ways that they access public health information more easily and that makes such data more readily available [http://secondlife.com]. The Environmental Protection Agency's official blog [http://blog.epa.gov/blog] grew out of Deputy Administrator Marcus Peacock's blog; it offers an in-depth look at its work in defense of the environment.

The Defense Department's site [http://www.dodvclips.mil] posts briefings about the wars in Iraq and in Afghanistan, along with speeches from top military officials and footage from across the globe. For users able to wrangle access, Intellipedia, the online encyclopedia for intelligence agencies, and its sister Diplopedia, for the State Department, provide the latest information via their agencies intranets but access is based on level of security clearance.



<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/photogallery.html#885/climate/>

ECONOMIC SECURITY

4. Bergsten, C. Fred A PARTNERSHIP OF EQUALS: HOW WASHINGTON SHOULD RESPOND TO CHINA'S ECONOMIC CHALLENGE (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 87, No. 4, July-August 2008)

According to Bergsten, director of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, China has become one of the world economic superpowers even though it has an authoritarian government and most of the population remains poor. While the U.S. and the European Union strive to bring China into the world economic order they have built and defended for 60 years, China is increasingly challenging that order without offering a real alternative. Even though China has the biggest stake in the global trading system, its refusal to participate

constructively in WTO negotiations almost guarantees disastrous failure for the round. Possibly even worse, China's challenge to the international monetary system by intervening massively in the foreign-exchange markets to maintain a hugely undervalued yuan, contrary to IMF rules, has created imbalances that could trigger a crash in the U.S. dollar and wreck economies around the world. China is similarly acting uncooperatively in commodity markets, environmental negotiations, and foreign aid. "China continues to act like a small country with little impact on the global system at large and therefore little responsibility for it," Bergsten writes. What the U.S. should do is approach China to provide joint leadership of the global economic

system. China's own interests should lead it to accept an invitation to accept increasing responsibility for the functioning of the world economy.

5. Taibbi, Matt ECONOMIC REALITIES ARE KILLING OUR ERA OF FANTASY POLITICS (AlterNet, posted July 19, 2008)

The author predicts that during the coming presidential election campaign, the Republican and Democratic candidates and media will feed the American public various storylines couched as the "national debate" that will obscure the most pressing issue -- the disappearance of the American middle class. Writes Taibbi, "median income has declined by almost \$2,500 over the past seven years, we have zero personal savings rate in America for the

first time since the Great Depression, and 5 million people have slipped below the poverty level since the beginning of the decade." But he says the national debate will not focus on haves and have-nots, rich and poor, or employers versus employees. The debate will not touch the military contractors who are making huge profits from the war in Iraq, an issue that Taibbi calls "a profound expression of our national priorities, a means of taking money from ordinary, struggling people and redistributing it not downward but upward, to connected insiders, who turn your tax money into pure profit." With the manufacturing sector of the U.S. economy shipped abroad, the service/managerial economy can no longer support a healthy middle class.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

6. Chayes, Antonia HOW AMERICAN TREATY BEHAVIOR THREATENS NATIONAL SECURITY (International Security, vol. 33, no. 1, Summer 2008, pp. 45-81)

Chayes, visiting professor at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, asserts that current U.S. treaty behavior is antiquated in an era of globalization and interdependence, and has produced growing concern among both allies and less friendly nations. The U.S. has generated confusion and anger abroad on such fundamental issues as nuclear proliferation, terrorism, human rights, civil liberties, environmental disasters, and commerce. The author emphasizes

that such a climate is not conducive to international cooperation in the conduct of foreign and security policy. Among U.S. actions that have caused concern are the failure to ratify several treaties; the attachment of reservations, understandings, and declarations before ratification; the failure to support a treaty regime once ratified; and treaty withdrawal. The author argues that the structural and historical reasons for American treaty behavior are deeply rooted in the U.S. system of government and do not merely reflect superpower arrogance. Nonetheless, the world confronts too many global problems that will take for longer to

to solve, and probably cannot be solved, without the United States.

7. Pickering, Thomas NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR NONPROLIFERATION (Arms Control Today, vol. 38, no. 5, June 2008, pp. 11-14)

The author, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, says that the next administration needs to form a broad strategy on the issues associated with nonproliferation, disarmament, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. He advocates a careful blend of multilateral initiatives, bilateral agreements and unilateral actions. The former U.S. ambas-

ambassador to the United Nations also emphasizes the importance of concluding a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. Ambassador Pickering also proposes advancing an international nuclear fuel regime. "We should try to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether," he says, starting with steps to strengthen U.S.-Russian bilateral arms control and to preserve the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty. Pickering, who served as ambassador to Moscow, also suggests that the two nations consider reducing and eliminating tactical nuclear weapons. .

U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

8. Bracco, Tara THE INNOVATION IMPERATIVE (American Theatre, July/August 2008, pp. 36-41)

American theater is looking for innovative methods to increase their attendance and solvency. In November of last year, the Theatre Communications Group (TCG) held a two-day event called "Cultivating Innovation: From the Board Room to the Box Office", focusing on new ideas to help non-profit theaters. The author cites the New York Metropolitan Opera, which is increasing opera's audience by transmitting production into several hundred movie theaters in North America and Europe, and is advertising on New York buses and doing telecasts on screens in Times Square and Lincoln Center. Another area ripe for reconsideration is the traditional expectation that 50 to 70 percent of theater's budget should be

derived from ticket sales; this is changing, as endowments have grown in size, allowing some theaters to cut ticket prices to attract a younger audience and increase attendance. In the end, each theater company must find its own innovative way to financial stability.

9. Carter, Heather; Foulger, Teresa; Ewbank, Ann Dutton HAVE YOU GOOGLED YOUR TEACHER LATELY? TEACHERS' USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 89, no. 9, May 2008, 5 pp.)

The authors, all of whom are involved in teacher education at Arizona State University, recognize that social networking is a potentially beneficial tool for educators and cite some of the ways in which experienced teachers have used it to enhance instruction, to establish deeper relationships with students or to remind students of

potentially beneficial tool for educators and cite some of the ways in which experienced teachers have used it to enhance instruction, to establish deeper relationships with students or to remind students of deadlines and quizzes. But the inability of some to understand that teachers are held to a higher standard of moral behavior than the general population has resulted in a growing number of incidents that are affecting the entire profession, as careers are ruined by a nude photo, intemperate remarks about professional frustrations, reference to sex or alcohol or use of profanity. State certification procedures often mandate that teachers shall not "engage in conduct which would discredit the teaching profession." The Ohio Education Association is now strongly discouraging its members from joining social networking sites. U.S. courts,

while recognizing the free speech rights of teachers, balance those rights against the ability of the government employer to maintain an efficiently-run organization.

10. Kanjwal, Hafsa AMERICAN MUSLIMS AND THE USE OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY (Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, vol. 9, no. 2, Summer/Fall 2008, pp. 133-139)

Cultural diplomacy should take precedence over public relations diplomacy, and the American Muslim community needs to develop a sophisticated cultural presence before it can be coherent on a civic or political level to create a cohesive and accessible American Muslim identity.

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